

a fleshy protuberance or knob near the base of the upper mandible. Upon looking up Cassin's description of the *Cerorhina suckleyi*, now known to be the young of the present species, and Dr Coues's account of this bird in Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1868, I find that the young Horn-billed Puffin, just casting the downy plumage, is described as having this same fleshy knob on the bill. As my specimens show that the knob is present in winter, I am inclined to believe that the fleshy knob is really entirely persistent, and is the matrix or core, so to speak, of the horny excrescence, which latter is superimposed upon it only on the near approach of the mating season, and shed at its end, leaving a 'horn' behind, though quite devoid of its horny sheath. In ordinary museum specimens this tough membranous knob is not apparent, having so dried away and shrunk to the bill as to have lost its distinctive character.

It is to be hoped that California collectors will be able to furnish a series of notes on the bill of this species, showing its character at the several seasons. At present the matter cannot be said to be fully understood.—H. W. HENSHAW, *Washington, D. C.*

A Crested Auk on the Massachusetts Coast.—While on a recent collecting trip to Chatham, Mass., I was asked by Mr. A. W. Baker, an intelligent and trustworthy gunner and fisherman of that place, to give him the name of a bird killed at Chatham during the winter of 1884-'85, which he described as being very much like the Little Auk or Dovekie in form and color, though a little larger, and having a tuft of narrow, pointed feathers on the front of the head, curving upward and forward. From his minute description of the bird it was evidently one of the Little Crested Auks, apparently *Simorhynchus cristatellus*—a bird he had otherwise never seen or heard of, but which he very accurately described. That the bird was one of the Little Crested Auks there can be no doubt.

The occurrence of such a bird on the Massachusetts coast is of course entirely accidental and surprising. We have, however, the Tufted Puffin (*Lunda cirrhata*) recorded from Greenland and the coast of Maine, the Black-throated Guillemot (*Synthliborhamphus antiquus*) from Wisconsin (*cf.* Sennett, Auk, I, p. 98), and the Paroquet Auk (*Cyclorhynchus psittaculus*) from Sweden, showing that these Northwest Coast species of Alcidae are more or less given to wandering to points far remote from their proper habitats.—J. A. ALLEN, *American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

The Thick-billed Grebes (*Podilymbus podiceps*) Breeding in Kansas.—B. L. Bennett and V. L. Kellogg of Emporia, Kans., both report finding, May 26, 1885, in a pond or slough near the city, quite a number of the nests of this bird containing from five to ten eggs each.—N. S. Goss. *Topeka, Kans.*